

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BERLIN 05777 181730Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----181738Z 125584 /46

O 181605Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4552
INFO -AMEMBASSY BONN INNEDIATE 9886
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USBERLIN IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T BERLIN 5777

EXDIS

E.O.11652: GDS TAGS: PFOR, US, UR, GW, FR, UK
SUBJECT: BERLIN: SOVIET DEMARCHE ON MILITARY PATROLS

REF: (A) BONN 06582, (B) STATE 086258, (C) STATE 086297

1. DURING MEETING APRIL 18 TO DSCUSS GORONWY-ROBERTS' GDR VISIT (SEPTEL) AMBASSADOR CRADDOCK TOOK INITIATIVE IN RAISING WITH FRENCH AMBASSADOR AND CHARGE RECENT SOVIET DEMARCHE IN PARIS ON MILITARY PATROLS IN EAST BERLIN (REF A).
2. CRADDOCK MADE FOLLOWING POINTS: THIS WAS FIRST TIME SOVIETS HAD MADE SUCH A FORMAL PROTEST, ALTHOUGH ABRASSIMOV HAD REFERRED TO PATROLS IN HIS RECENT MEETINGS WITH AMBASSADORS WORIGHT AND WORMSER; THE LEVEL AT WHICH IT WAS MADE COULD LEAVE NO DOUBT THAT IT HAD TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY; AND THIRD, THE WORDING OF THE DEMARCHE (PROGRESSIVELY REDUCING THE PATROLS TO NIL) SUGGESTED A CERTAIN FLEXIBILITY IN THE SOVIET POSITION. CRADDOCK
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NOTED THAT HE WAS NOT AWARE THAT SUCH A DEMARCHE HAD YET BEEN MADE IN LONDON, AND CHARGE SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH HE HAD NOT SEEN THE MESSAGE, HE WAS AWARE AN APPROACH HAD BEEN MADE IN WASHINGTON. (WE HAD NOT YET RECEIVED ANY OF REFTELS.)

3. CRADDOCK EXPRESSED SURPRISE BY THE SPEED OF RECENT

GDR/SOVIET MOVES WITH RESPECT TO BERLIN AND FELT THAT MOSCOW AND EAST BERLIN MAY HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED BY THE "RELATIVE LACK OF RESPONSE" ON THE ALLIED SIDE, PARTICULARLY IN COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS ALLIED STANDS WHEN PUSHED ON BERLIN. IN THIS CONNECTION CRADDOCK SHOWED US A RECENT CABLE FROM THEIR MISSION IN WEST BERLIN, REPORTING A CONVERSATION BETWEEN A NOVOSTI AND A BBC CORRESPONDENT. ACCORDING TO THE MESSAGE, THE NOVOSTI CORRESPONDENT SAID THE SOVIETS WERE SURPRISED AND ENCOURAGED BY THE LACK OF ALLIED RESPONSE TO RECENT GDR MEASURES. AS A CONSEQUENCE, THE SOVIETS/GDR WERE REVISING THEIR TIMETABLE OF MOVES AGAINST ALLIED ACCESS TO EAST BERLIN, BECAUSE IT WAS OBVIOUS THE ALLIES WANT TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION OVER BERLIN.

4. CRADDOCK FELT THERE WAS NEED FOR AN IMMEDIATE, HIGH LEVEL REJECTION OF THE LATEST SOVIET DEMARCHE AND WAS OF THE VIEW THAT SUCH A REJECTION SHOULD BE MADE PUBLIC AND PROMPTLY. HE WAS CONCERNED THAT NEWS OF THE LATEST SOVIET DEMARCHE WOULD LEAK SOON AND THAT, IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY PUBLIC ALLIED STATEMENT, PEOPLE MIGHT SPECULATE THAT PRIVATE NEGOTIATIONS WERE GOING ON WITH THE SOVIETS CONCERNING PATROLS AND THEIR FREQUENCY.

5. AFTER FURTHER DISCUSSION, CRADDOCK ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IT MIGHT BE BETTER NOT TO MAKE SUCH A RESPONSE PUBLIC BECAUSE THIS MIGHT LOCK THE SOVIETS INTO A POSITION FROM WHICH THEY COULD NOT BACK AWAY. CRADDOCK SAID HE WANTED TO DISCUSS ISSUE BECAUSE HE WOULD BE
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MAKING RECOMMENDATION FOR PROMPT, HIGH LEVEL REJECTION IN CONNECTION WITH APRIL 19 BONN GROUP MEETINGS. POLANSKY

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Message Attributes

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